

From: hsrodgers@UCLAlumni.net@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/14/02 8:58pm
Subject: Proposed settlement(s) with Microsoft

In the olden days of personal computers, 10-15 years ago when people were getting interested in this new medium, there were more than a few companies making computers with both different components and different operating systems. And there were lots of companies making software programs to work with the various systems.

Thanks to the competitive atmosphere that prevailed at the time each had to not only keep up with the others but stay a jump or two ahead of them. It was a kind of leap-frog thing that benefited users and at the same time kept the computer industry adjusting, improving and advancing in every way.

In those days we had a lot of products, hardware and software, to choose from - to fit our personal preferences.

How things have changed! Microsoft's Windows not only dominates the field now, but Microsoft has been adjudged not only a monopoly, but designs its system in such a way as to make it difficult, and sometimes impossible, for other company products to work in conjunction with Windows.

That's an unfortunate and giant step from the competitive atmosphere that put a personal computer on nearly every desk - and even two or more in many homes - to a predatory monopolistic enclave!

No wonder the current class-action suit that holds Microsoft guilty of overcharging for Windows may not be settled by allowing Microsoft to further permeate the field by furnishing Microsoft-only programs in reconditioned computers to be given to under funded schools. (Some complain that Microsoft's offer would cost only about \$1 million of their reported \$36 billion of cash and short term securities.)

Wouldn't it be nice if the courts, U.S. or EU, could do whatever is needed to get us back to the old handsomely progressive competitive days by requiring Microsoft to loosen up and cooperate with other computer companies so we could again enjoy constant improvements, and choices, in software and hardware - at competitive prices?

At least we can dream, can't we?

Howard S Rodgers
<hsrodgers@UCLAlumni.net>
Tel & Fax 928 445-7781
PO Box 10487
Prescott AZ 86304-0487